

JUSTIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE

Activity: Conservation Grants

Program Component	1999 Estimate	Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	2000 Budget Request	Change From 1999 (+/-)
Conservation Grants	0	0	+150,000	150,000	+150,000
Total Requirements \$(000)	0	0	+150,000	150,000	+150,000

AUTHORIZATION

Funds to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (16 U.S.C. 4601).

OVERVIEW

The **Conservation Grants** activity provides competitive grants to State, Tribal and local governments to assist these communities in the preservation of green spaces.

APPLICABLE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MISSION GOALS

- IIIb Through partnerships with State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and conservation benefits for the American people.
- IIIc Assisted through Federal funds and programs, the protection of recreational opportunities is achieved through formal mechanisms to ensure continued access for public recreation use.

FY 2000 BUDGET REQUEST

	2000 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
■ Conservation Grants \$(000)	150,000	+150,000

■ **Conservation Grants (+\$150,000,000; +45 FTE):** The NPS is requesting \$150 million and 45 full-time equivalents in FY 2000 for a retooled "State-side Land and Water Conservation Fund" program to provide grants to States, Tribes, and localities to acquire lands and easements for open space, greenways, outdoor recreation, urban parks, wildlife habitat, and wetlands in support of the Administration's *Land Legacy Initiative*. This initiative is part of a \$1.0 billion effort to preserve America's land resources and is central to the President's strategy of "Forging a Conservation Vision for the 21st Century." Grants would be awarded through a competitive process, with emphasis on acquisition projects consistent with "smart growth" and open space plans. Criteria for grant awards will be developed in consultation with State, Tribal, and local officials and the public. The grants will require matching contributions from State and local sponsors. Grants would not be available for construction or rehabilitation of recreational facilities.

In recent years, many States and localities have acted through bond issues and other means to acquire open space, park and recreation lands, protect farmland, wildlife habitat, and other highly valued resources. In addition, the demand for outdoor recreational opportunities within access to urban and growing suburban areas is steadily climbing. This grant program recognizes State and local efforts already being made, and seeks to leverage and support such efforts through the addition of Federal grants that encourage and assist the best and highest priority State and local land conservation efforts throughout the Nation. Of the amount requested, \$4.5 million will be reserved for program administration. Aside from normal grant administration expenditures, start-up costs will be incurred due to the need to develop program guidelines, project selection criteria, staffing, training and technical assistance.